<u>UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION</u>

For:

MOBILE CONTENT DELIVERY SYSTEM

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<div align="center"><u>**Mobile Content Delivery System**</u></div>

<div align="center"><u>**Field of Invention**</u></div>

This invention relates to systems and methods for delivering mobile content over a wireless communications network.

<div align="center"><u>**Background Information**</u></div>

Traditionally, the majority of data messages have been sent across radio networks in real-time when the user requests them. This common practice of "Deliver NOW" is utilized extensively in the growing area of text-based message or voice services of cellular networks. The delivery of data in real-time ignores the fact that wireless network data traffic is unevenly distributed. The maximum network capacity is dimensioned to match the network load peaks, thus leaving a lot of unused capacity in the network. Typically, in a twenty-four hour day cycle (except for a few traffic peaks during office hours), more than half of the network capacity is unused.

Typical message delivery systems on wireless networks have sustained themselves due to strict adherence to a small file size requirement. The cost of a wireless network delivering larger file size content such as a video clip or an image file on demand would be prohibitively expensive, as well as time-consuming, to the end-user. Many current wireless network delivery systems have addressed the problem by adding additional network base stations and fine tuning coding techniques. These methods only lead to additional capacity without reducing the cost to send the actual data over the wireless network. If the sending device tries to send a message and the recipient is not available (e.g. terminal is turned off) the service center continues to send messages so long it can reach the recipient device (the amount of time the service center attempts to send the message can be limited to a pre-determined time window).

Therefore, there exists a need for a system and method whereby a user could specify, using his or her wireless terminal device, whether a message is to be delivered in real-

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time which will prevent the system from managing present network load conditions while the message is being delivered, or to be time delayed to suit the existing demands on the wireless network.

Summary of the Invention

In a preferred embodiment of the invention there is provided a system and method whereby a user who has requested content selects a class of delivery for the content from his or her wireless terminal device, such as a cellular phone. The class of delivery of message content can be selected by the user on a transaction basis, or subscription-based and pre-defined in a user profile. The content is delivered as a message, which is preferably comprised of three parts: a message header (e.g. the source and destination address, the identity and type of message, etc.); a message body, which is essentially the content; and a delivery class field, identifying the class the user selected to deliver the message content. The user can preferably select from at least two delivery classes: "deliver NOW" in real-time; or a specified "time delay delivery". A "time delay delivery" is referring to a pre-determined time window to deliver content, and can be further divided into classes based on the defined delay. The "time delay delivery" class allows the wireless network to send the content at a time when the network is least utilized.

In the preferred embodiment, a user's content request is sent to a Content/Service Provider which creates a content delivery message with the requested information including the content and delivery class. The Content/Service Provider relays the message to a Messaging Transport System (MTS) in charge of delivering the message to the user, or directly to the Mobile Content Delivery (MCD) system. The selected MCD System acts as the scheduled delivery engine that calculates the pre-determined time window the content delivery message is to be sent by notifying the Messaging Transport System. The time window of delivery is calculated preferably taking into account such information as the delivery class, the wireless device location in the radio network, the wireless network usage and relative capacity (actual and historical), and the size of the content that can be delivered in the pre-determined time window. A short period before the content delivery message is to be delivered, the wireless device

location is determined, the actual network load condition at the wireless device is determined and compared to the historical information (the "load curve"). If conditions are right, the message is sent to the end-user's wireless device via the cellular network.

The present invention will introduce a mechanism that allows operators to provide new data services (especially high-volume content) cheaper without sacrificing their high-margin business, thus enabling more services, as well as attracting more users. The present invention further allows data traffic on a wireless network to be more evenly distributed over a twenty-four hour day cycle, thus actually increasing the total network throughput, without having to upgrade the wireless network components. The present invention will provide users with new services at a reduced price, directly to their wireless device.

Other and further aspects of the present invention will become apparent during the course of the following description and by reference to the attached drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

FIG. 1 is a Mobile Content Delivery Wireless Network diagram illustrating one embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a Mobile Content Delivery Wireless Network diagram illustrating another embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a functional diagram illustrating the Mobile Content Delivery system according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4 illustrates a flow diagram of the Mobile Content Delivery process according to the exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a diagram of the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG 6 is a graph illustrating a generalized wireless network air interface usage profile over a twenty-four hour period.

FIG. 7 illustrates the relative cost to deliver various services for each delivery class.

Detailed Description of the Invention

Figure 1 shows one embodiment of a wireless network of the present invention whereby an individual may use a hand-held wireless terminal **30** (e.g., a cellular phone) enabled with a browser to view, select, and specify a delivery class for a web-based content from a Content/Service Provider **13** via a data network such as the internet. In another embodiment the delivery class can automatically be selected for the user depending on the destination address, the content type, the content provider, and the sender agreement with the operator accompanied by billing information collected by the MCD system for each user. In this embodiment, the Content/Service Provider **13** creates a message with both user selected content and delivery class, which it sends to a Messaging Transport System (MTS) **12**, which analyzes wireless terminal capabilities and status, as well as is capable of delivering content message to the wireless terminal device **30**. The MTS **12** acts as a gatekeeper of all content that is provided over the wireless network and also could possibly select the delivery class depending on the content or other network parameters in one particular embodiment.

The MTS **12** transmits the message to a Mobile Content Delivery (MCD) system **11** describing an embodiment of the present invention. The MCD system **11** schedules a delivery time window of the content by analyzing the delivery class, wireless device location, existing network activity loading and the content size while taking into account the agreed upon user maximum delivery time. The MCD system **11** is provided with delivery time window flexibility provided the end-user did not select "Deliver NOW" as the delivery class. The MCD system **11** also preferably tracks previous message deliveries in order to properly predict and

schedule future message deliveries at a more cost-effective network activity time window without surpassing the agreed upon user maximum delivery time. The Mobile Content Delivery system **11** will be discussed in detail hereinafter in connection with Figure 3.

Moments before the pre-determined time window of delivery, MCD system **11** returns the message content to the MTS **12.** The MTS **12** relays a "Wake-Up" message to the Short Message System(SMS) **10,** or an equivalent service center, which in-turn sends a "Wake-Up" message to the wireless terminal device **30**. The Short Message System **10** generates a short message and attaches a Quality of Service (QoS) parameter which adjusts the speed of delivery of content through the network. The SMS **10**, like the MTS **12**, is a well-known component of the wireless network. Once the scheduled delivery time window has arrived, the content is delivered to the end-user at the wireless terminal device **30**. In traditional cellular networks using less advanced terminal devices the content is fetched by the terminal device **30** using information in the "Wake-Up" message, in advanced networks the content is pushed to the wireless terminal device from the network, in this embodiment by the MTS **12**. Figure 1 is a simplified illustration of the mobile content delivery wireless network. Variants of Figure 1 can include transferring message content between multiple MCD systems **11** as well as selecting delivery servers other than MTS **12** to deliver content to the end-user. These variations can occur while being transparent to both the end-user user at wireless terminal device **30** and the Content Service Provider **13**. A detailed description of these variations are described in Figures 3, 4 , and 5.

Figure 2 shows another embodiment of a wireless network of the present invention whereby an individual having an agreement with an operator allowing scheduled delivery may use a hand-held wireless terminal **30** (e.g., a cellular phone) enabled with a browser to view and select web-based content from a Content/Service Provider **13** via a data network such as the internet. The MCD system **11** is provided with the capability of listening to all traffic, intercepting and re-directing it, as well as being able to insert new data or modify existing data streams, while being able to coordinate downloading content from the content/service provider to the network. When the user with a hand-held wireless terminal **30** selects some large content

from the Content/Service Provider **13**, the MCD system **11** intercepts that traffic based on what has been specified for the user in the operator profile. The Content/Service Provider **13** service continues sending the large content, but it is stored in the MCD system **11** instead of being sent to the wireless terminal device **30**. At the same time, the MCD system **11** informs (e.g. with a specific web page) the wireless terminal device **30** that the delivery is being scheduled, disconnects the terminal session and simultaneously downloads the most recent content from the Content/Service Provider **13** to a Cellular Network **51**. The MCD system **11** schedules a delivery time window of the content using methods described earlier, and once the scheduled delivery time window has arrived, the content is delivered to the end-user at the wireless terminal device **30** using an existing push mechanism in the cellular network. In another possible variation the MCD system **11** could deliver just the content link address to wireless terminal 30, allowing for the actual content to be downloaded at a later time to ensure the user receives the most current available content.

Figure 3 shows one implementation of the Mobile Content Delivery System **11** of the present invention. Variants of Figure 3 can include different delay mechanisms (selected by the user, specified by the Content Provider, or subscription-based), as well as various transport mechanisms (through the MCD system, through another system in the network, using pull or push depending on the wireless device capabilities). These variations can occur while being transparent to the end-user user at wireless terminal device **30**. The components in this implementation shown in Figure 3 are: the MCD systems **11**; a Cellular Network **51**;which could be comprised of a Delivery Server **33**, a Base Station System **32**; and a Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36**. On a larger scale, Figure 3 can be part of a wide area network comprising many users and multiple base stations to cover a large user region.

The end-user locates content he wishes to receive via a browsing screen **31** on his wireless terminal device **30**. On the screen, the end-user selects the content and the desired class of delivery. In this example implementation the user selects a delivery class from three delivery classes : "Deliver Now", for time critical data; "Specified Time Delay" delivery, for less critical

data; or, "Overnight Delivery", which is the least expensive option. Alternatively, his delivery class may also be selected automatically as described earlier. (Note: Three classes of time delivery are shown for illustrative purposes only, the MCD system allows for numerous delivery classes and corresponding prices, set by the operator.) The user browsing session goes over the wireless network via Base Station System **32**, which in turn relays it to the Content/Service Provider **13** through a Layer 7 Switch **35** connection to a data network such as the Internet, Extranet, Intranet, LAN, or alternate networks. The Layer 7 switch **35** monitors messages for preset parameters to determine scheduled delivery.

The Content/Service Provider **13** creates a message based on receipt from the wireless terminal of addressing information such as: IP address or mobile phone number, default message server address, content request ID, and the class of delivery, which it then routes to the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** of the selected MCD system **11** via the Layer 7 switch **35**. Depending on network data activity, the Layer 7 switch **35** may re-direct the message content to another MCD system **11** with a lighter network server data activity load. Alternatively, if the chosen transport mechanism (in this example implemenation the MTS **12**) supports usage of delivery class parameters, the Layer 7 switch **35** may re-direct the message content to a different MTS **12**, which communicates with the MCD system **11**.

The Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** fetches wireless network activity updates and current cell user location from Cellular Network **51** which it uses to schedule a time window to send the message to the wireless terminal device **30** based on the specified class of delivery, the user handset location, network capacity usage, and file size of the content. Once the pre-determined delivery time window has arrived, the selected Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** sends the re-directed message content to MTS **12** (reference Figure 1). The MTS notifies the SMS **10** (reference Figure 1) to send a Wake-Up message to the wireless terminal device **30** via the Cellular Network **51**. The MTS **12** acts a Delivery Server **33** and delivers the requested content to the wireless terminal device **30** via the Cellular Network **51**. In one embodiment, the MCD **11** can be the Delivery Server **33**, in another some other transport

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mechanism is used as Delivery Server by the MCD. The present invention allows the selection and re-direction of message content amongst various MCD systems **11** to be transparent to both the Content Service Provider **13** and the wireless terminal device **30** allowing for just one destination address, as well as the option for wireless terminal device **30** having the capability of being the source of the content to be sent to the network with the permission of the MCD system. In a preferred embodiment the user receives message content to the terminal device **30** at a reduceD price, without having to wait for it to arrive over an active wireless terminal session, making the experience a pleasant one.

Figure 4 shows the functional logic flow of mobile content delivery in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In step 40, the user browses content via the wireless terminal device **30**. In steps 41 and 42, the user orders content and can preferably choose from User-selected and Auto-Selected classes of delivery. User-selected, allows the user to select the class of delivery, "Deliver Now", or time delayed delivery as described earlier. Auto-Selected, is where a predetermined delivery class type is already established due to an existing agreement between the operator or Content/Service Provider **13** and the user in order to avoid high delivery cost, for instance; or, where the delivery class can possibly be linked to the content type automatically. (Note-The network operator and the content service provider may or may not be the same entity.) In step 43, a Content/Service Provider **13** creates a content delivery message which includes the delivery class information in the message header. In step 44, Content Provider **13** sends the message to the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** of the selected MCD system **11** over Layer 7 switch **35**. The Layer 7 switch **35,** monitors network data traffic and may re-direct message content **50** to other MCD systems **11** under lighter network loads, or to other systems supporting MCD functionality, in step 45. In step 46, the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** schedules the content delivery time window for the user and forwards the message content **50** to the Messaging Transport System (MTS) **12**. As the delivery time window approaches, the MTS **12** notifies the Short Message System (SMS) **10** to send a "Wake-up" message to the wireless terminal device **30** in step 47. In Step 48, the SMS **10** sends

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the "Wake-up" message to wireless terminal device **30** via the Cellular Network **51**. In Step 49, the MTS **12** forwards the message content **50** to the Delivery Server **33** via the Cellular Network **51**. In Step 50, the ordered message content **50** is delivered to the wireless terminal device **30** via Delivery Server **33**.

Figure 5 shows details of a preferred embodiment of the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** within the MCD system **11**. It demonstrates the method by which the Mobile Content Delivery System **11** schedules the delivery of content based on a number of wireless network parameters. In particular, the details of the interaction between the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** and other wireless network elements are shown. The L7 switch **35** receives the content delivery message **50** coming into the mobile network, consisting of necessary parameters to trigger the scheduled delivery, such as the address of the service where the content was viewed and ordered, the destination address of the wireless terminal device **30** (or possibly a mobile phone number) to which the content is to be delivered, the delivery class, and the body of the message, which contains the content to be delivered. The Layer 7 switch **35** monitors messages and other network traffic and forwards those message content requests that have a delayed class of delivery. Once an MCD system **11** is selected, the Layer 7 switch **35** forwards the message content the message to the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** of the selected Mobile Content Delivery System **11**. The Layer 7 switch **35** may re-direct the message content to another MCD (compatible) system **11** as mentioned earlier. Based on the delivery class, the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** records the earliest allowed time for delivery, as well as an expiration date in Block **52**, that is used by the queue logic for the specific message. Block **54** determines the priority of the message in a Content Queue **55** based on the delivery time window remaining.

In parallel with the content queuing activity, the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** queries Cellular Network **51** in real time for the cell ID corresponding to the cell in which the wireless terminal device **30** is currently located at Block **56**. Cell activity records are maintained in server database **57**. The Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** uses these

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records as well as on-line queries in determining the cell's capacity and usage in block **58**. Off-line file transfer regarding cell activity records can be gathered to server database **57** from the cellular network **51**. On-line queries regarding cell activity can be done from the cellular network **51** at block **58**. At decision block **60**, the Message Buffering and Scheduling Engine **36** assesses past and present cell capacity, current user location, content file size, and time remaining to deliver content. If the decision block **60** determines that this is not an appropriate time window to deliver the message content, the queue priority of the message is adjusted based on the absolute time remaining to deliver the message content while taking into account the time lapsed to reach the "NO SEND" decision. However, if decision block **60** determines that this an appropriate time window to deliver message content based on the aforementioned factors, the Layer 7 switch **35** will designate a Delivery Server **33** selecting from a group of servers available to deliver the message content at Block **61**. At Block **62**, Deliver Server **33** delivers message content **50** to the wireless terminal device **30**. Many plausible variations of Figure 5 exist based on chosen service and delivery mechanism, all parameterized in the MCD and transparent to wireless terminal device **30** and the Content Service Provider **13**.

Figure 6 shows a generalized usage profile for a wireless network air interface over a 24 hour day cycle within one territory. Actual usage profiles can vary greatly from this illustration. The embodiment of the present invention delivers content via the wireless network taking into account such usage profiles. Reference to the Figure 6 shows that in the morning between the hours of approximately 7 AM and 10 AM and the afternoon between the hours of approximately 3 PM and 6 PM the wireless network experiences the heaviest usage traffic. It would thus be most costly to deliver content during these time periods, and should be avoided unless the message is time critical. Between the approximate hours of 10 AM and 3 PM the data traffic falls off to approximately 50-55% capacity, down from a peak of approximately 80% capacity. Finally, the ideal time to deliver message content is either during the early morning hours between midnight and 6 AM or the late evening hours between 9 PM and midnight. During these time periods will likely present the most cost-effective time windows for

scheduling delivery of content due to minimal network activity, which results in preserving the most network bandwidth. Again, Figure 6 is a generalized illustration. Realistically, there can be many peaks and nulls in usage throughout the twenty-four day cycle creating many cost-effective time windows of opportunity for mobile operators to deliver content, e.g., 2:00PM – 2:15PM, without harming real-time wireless network traffic.

Figure 7 illustrates some of the advantages provided to the service operator due to the embodiments of the present invention. The curved line represents a possible array of commercial services available on the market today, spanning from voice and text-based messaging to real-time video. The small content file size usually found in messaging, voice or equivalent services at a relative cost factor of 1 to 100 units per megabyte (MB) allows service operators to deliver this type of content essentially in real-time without suffering from cost spikes due to bandwidth limitations. Without the present invention, however, delivering content having large file sizes such as image files and MP3 music audio files, in real time, would be difficult to manage due to the wireless network bandwidth constraints, especially during peak traffic hours. In addition, the low retail cost per MB that the user could reasonably be charged for such large transfers would make it almost economically unfeasible for service operators. The present invention introduces the option for the Time Delayed Delivery region where the relative cost factor "X" is reduced to a fraction of X. In this region, content with the file size of image and MP3 files now can be delivered at a time when the wireless network has less demands for bandwidth which reduces the overall cost of content delivery to the user. The invention also makes it possible to lower the current traffic peaks by distributing the traffic over a longer time period. This time delayed delivery makes it economically feasible for service operators to deliver content in this spectrum of file size.

Finally, the third spectrum of content which demands the most network bandwidth, is graphics-rich browsing and real-time video files. In the absence of the present invention, the service operator could only charge a fraction per MB relative to what it could charge for messaging/voice services. Delivering this type of large file size message content in the "Deliver

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NOW" region would be cost prohibitive. The present invention allows large file content messages to be time-delay delivered at a pre-determined time window, taking advantage of low-load "time windows" in the network traffic loading profiles. The Overnight Delivery (e.g., selecting a time window within 24 hours) option could result in a cost factor reduction to 2.5% of X relative to the "Deliver Now" region. The significant reduction in cost to deliver high bandwidth content to the end-user will make delivering mobile services such as graphics-rich browsing and real-time video economically feasible. The three time delivery regions shown in Figure 7 are for illustrative purposes only, and can be defined by the operator or Content/Service Provider. A variation of Figure 7 could include users tapping into other data network access mechanisms (e.g. WLAN, DVB-T, Bluetooth etc.) through the MCD system allowing system operators to bill the user in the same manner, according to content delivery timing requirements.

Ramifications and Scope:

Although the description above contains many specifics, these are merely provided to illustrate the invention and should not be construed as limitations of the invention's scope. Thus, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various modifications and variations can be made in the system and processes of the present invention without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Accordingly, it is intended that the present invention cover its modifications and variations provided they come within the scope of the appended claims and their equivalents. In this context, "equivalents" means each and every implementation for carrying out the functions in the claims, even if not explicitly described herein.

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